

Exhibit 2

Push on to revive dormant party committee

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The scrum for control of the city of [Albany Democratic Committee](#) -- which, depending on who you ask, may not even still exist -- is heating up.

County Legislator [Wanda Willingham](#), whose successful primary power play pulled control of the committee out from under those allied with Mayor [Jerry Jennings](#), has for the first time publicly acknowledged that she plans to run for chairwoman -- assuming she can figure out a way to resuscitate the defunct 4-year-old political organization.

County Democratic Chairman [Dan McCoy](#) has said the city committee, which was formed in 2006 to counter the rising influence of suburban Democrats, ceased to exist when no one inside the committee's leadership called a meeting to reorganize within 20 days after the September primary.

That's not good enough for Willingham.

"What I'm stuck with here is that fact that we have a chair that is using technicalities to keep us from being able to operate as an independent voice for the city of Albany," Willingham told Insider.

Willingham said she believes the city and county committee leadership intentionally didn't call an organizational meeting because they wanted it to dissolve after Jennings' allies lost control.

"At this point, if running for chair would get this back, this conversation going, so we can move forward, that's what I'm going to do to. Yes, I'm going to run for chair," Willingham told us. "The committee people were elected. Those people deserve to serve in the capacity that they were elected into."

McCoy has said he has no plans to assemble the 300-plus city committee members before the full county committee meets in May but will meet with Albany's 15 ward leaders to decide in which direction to go.

If Willingham wants to meet sooner, he said, she can gather the signatures of one-third of the members and call a meeting.

Some have speculated that Willingham's push to consolidate her influence over city Democrats may be tied to three years from now, when the mayor's seat is up for re-election. If Jennings doesn't seek a sixth term, a Democratic free-for-all may be inevitable.

Willingham's sister, [Common Council](#) President [Carolyn McLaughlin](#), is next in line for mayor should Jennings leave office before his term expires and is among those who might consider a run to succeed him.

Admitting it's awfully early to be talking about 2013, we asked McLaughlin whether she planned to run a citywide race in three years.

"Of some kind," she replied coyly. And -- in a reference to her victory in last year's Democratic primary for council president, a primary in which the city committee, to her dismay, opted not to endorse anyone - McLaughlin said: "It's been proven that whether or not you have control of that committee you can win a citywide race."

Councilman [Anton Konev](#) is also among those who wants to see the city committee return.

"We're losing our political will as a city if we don't have an organization," Konev said. But, he added: "Mark my words, Wanda Willingham is not going to be city committee chairwoman."

The Scavo question

Wanda Willingham was also in the news lately after calling on colleague [Brian Scavo](#) to resign from the County Legislature in the wake of an allegedly racist blog comment he left on the [Times Union's](#) Local Politics blog that Willingham said was directed at her and evoked slavery and segregation.

We asked our readers on the blog what they thought should happen, and as of Tuesday evening, of the 345 votes cast, 58 percent said Scavo should not quit, while 42 percent said he should.

Salary check

In the wake of the current scandal involving Schenectady Fire Chief [Robert Farstad](#)'s overtime and possible pension padding, it's no surprise that chatter and e-mails began to fly about other possible unethical behavior.

The most recent whisperings are about the city's new budget analyst, a young college grad, and whether he has ties to Director of Administration John Paolino, his boss. We haven't gotten confirmation of what connection that might be. But the newly hired budget analyst had a \$15,522 raise put into the proposed 2011 budget for his \$35,700 job.

City Council President [Gary McCarthy](#) said he went to bat for the analyst, [Dan DeMilio](#), because DeMilio would essentially be taking over for Paolino next year. It was Stratton who cut the analyst raise out literally minutes before council approved the budget Nov. 1.

Stratton said Monday he's doesn't know whether DeMilio has ties to Paolino but that he trusts Paolino to bring in talented workers, and that the 2009 [Siena College](#) grad is doing his work. "No one is here on any other terms than to perform their job," Stratton said. DeMilio did major in finance and economics at Siena, and is working toward his CPA.

Inside Politics is a companion to the Local Politics blog -- <http://blogs.timesunion.com/localpolitics> -- and compiled by Jordan Carleo-Evangelist. [Lauren Stanforth](#) contributed. Reach the Insider via e-mail at jcarleo-evangelist@timesunion.com, on the phone at 454-5445 or at <http://twitter.com/tulocalpolitics>

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